

*Albany*  
This Sermon is occasional, and  
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It is hardly worthy of Dr. Sommer  
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pressed.

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## DISCOURSE

ON

OUR OBLIGATION

TO

THANKSGIVING, &c.

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DISCOURSE 3

ON  
OUR OBLIGATION

TO

THANKSGIVING,

FOR THE

PROSPECT OF THE ABOLITION OF THE  
AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE.

WITH A

PRAYER.

DELIVERED IN THE CHURCH OF JEDBURGH ON APRIL 15,

*By Thomas Somerville, D.D.*

*K*

K E L S O:

PRINTED, AT THE Union Press, BY J. PALMER.

Anno 1792.

[PRICE ONE SHILLING.]

DISCOUR

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T. B. N. & C. L. N. G.

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To Alexander Alison, Esq.

To whose zeal and activity  
the people in Scotland have been prin-  
cipally indebted, for calling their at-  
tention to the state of the African  
Slave-trade; and promoting every  
measure for the abolition of it;

This Discourse is inscribed by

His much obliged friend,  
and most obedient servant,

J. S.

Dr. Alexander Wilson, Esq.

To whom great and active  
the people in Scotland have been joined  
-especially indebted, for calling their at-  
tention to the state of the African  
Slave-trade; and promoting every  
measure for the abolition of it;

This Volume is presented by

His much-obliged friend

and most obedient servant,

J. A.

**DISCOURSE, &c.**

**PSALM cvii. 21. 22.**

*Oh that men would praise the Lord for his  
goodness, and for his wonderful works to  
the children of men!*

*And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thank-  
giving, and declare his works with rejoicing.*

**I** CONCLUDED my last discourse from  
these words with observing, that in order  
to cherish a disposition of devout thank-  
fulness, we ought to mark, with special  
attention, all those prosperous events,

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in the course of divine providence, which evidently tend to the deliverance and happiness of our own nation; or to the deliverance and happiness of any of our species in distant regions of the globe. Viewing in this light the resolutions lately adopted by one of the branches of the Legislature, for putting an end to the African slave-trade, I think it my indispensable duty to recommend it to the attention of my congregation, as a transcendant mercy, and a singular cause of rejoicing and of gratitude to the author of all goodness\*. For,

I.

\* This discourse was composed immediately after receiving the account of the resolutions of the House of Commons with respect to the abolition of the slave-trade, and is now published with very little alteration of the words in which it was then delivered. Some persons may perhaps think that the subject of it is premature; and that the final determination of the Legislature, upon that important question, is yet distant and uncertain. I shall only observe, That though the immediate abolition of the slave-trade would have been far more acceptable to the generality of the petitioners, yet it were uncandid

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I. I CONSIDER this event as a deliverance to our own nation in particular; a deliverance from an accession to the most unprovoked oppression, and the most outrageous cruelties, committed by any nation, at any period, since the world began. It will certainly be considered by posterity as one of the most extraordinary phenomena, in the history of the human race, that such presumptuous iniquity has been tolerated without remonstrance; and that it has continued to exist among a people so far enlightened, and, in other respects, distinguished by the liberality of their plans, and the benevolence of their actions. There are many projects of reformation and improvement, the advantages of which are

to suspect, that the members, who voted for a gradual abolition, have any intention to elude or long postpone the desire of the nation; nor, if they had any such intention, do I believe it possible for them to succeed in it.

still of secondary consequence, or which require to be traced through such a series of causes and effects, and depend so much upon contingent circumstances, that persons, who have an equal claim to judgment, information, and humanity, may very reasonably be supposed to differ in opinion, with respect to the propriety of attempting to carry them into execution. In doubtful cases, hesitation, enquiry, and gradual experiment, are commendable. At any rate, great tenderness and forbearance are due to those who differ from us in opinion, and who do not see with such an enlarged eye, as we think we ourselves do.— But the abolition of the slave-trade is a question, in the very face of it, of such prominent magnitude, comprehending the redress, not of slighter evils, or those which relate to any particular sect or party, but extending to the removal of  
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the most grievous oppressions, which affect a whole race of our fellow creatures, that it does not admit of a comparison with any other project of benevolence ever brought forward to public notice. The cruelty of it is so palpable, it strikes so violently against every principle of justice and humanity, that any deliberation about condemning it seems to be criminal. Reasoning is not only superfluous, but, intruded in such a subject, seems to impeach the acuteness and penetration of the understanding. It is an outrageous insult upon the nobler affections of the heart. If you feel as men you must perceive, how abominable a thing it is to make slaves of your fellow creatures. To be convinced that these sentiments are not affected or strained, you have only, for a few moments, to personate the unfortunate oppressed Africans.——But I forbear



a description, which I might be unable to recite, without wounding too deeply the feelings of my hearers, and departing myself from that composure which I wish to maintain in this place.

If I have now spoken the words of of truth and soberness, does not the prospect of abolishing the slave-trade afford a special and uncommon ground for thanksgiving and praise to Heaven? From what atrocious guilt, from what deserved vengeance, has not this country escaped? What a miracle of mercy, that the arm of the Almighty has not been stretched forth against us, and that we have this day a *name* among the nations? But, what aggravated guilt must we not have contracted? what awful judgments must we not have incurred? if the voice of humanity had been lifted up in vain; if this infamous traffic had been continued, and sanctioned by the approbation



tion of the Legislature, after the mysteries of its iniquity have been detected, and after authentic details of such cruelties have been exposed to the people. If we can suppose a nation mature for destruction, it must be that nation, which has adopted a systematic plan for oppressing and persecuting their fellow creatures, without limitation of time or regulations of control, without any provocation or complaint of injury sustained. The harmless Africans never invaded our territories; they never made war against us; they never were assisting to our enemies. All has been done upon the plea of necessity, or upon the barefaced pretext of subservience to our conveniency and gain, palliated by the impious misrepresentation of their being marked, by deficiency or imperfection of talents, for a lower class in the intellectual scale; as if the righteous Governor of the universe could

could intend that the prosperity of any one nation or society should be erected upon the depression of another; as if all his children were not the objects of his love. The God of the Christian is the God of the universe, with whom there is no respect of persons; and the untutored African and civilized European are, without distinction, the objects of his fatherly protection. And this leads me to a more pleasing branch of my subject.

II. I SAID that we ought to be thankful for every event, tending to the deliverance and happiness of any class and order of mankind.

As the Almighty has made of one blood all nations of the earth, so he has planted affections in the human breast, which refer to the happiness of mankind

mankind at large, and ascertain the universality of our kindred, and our common relation to the God and parent of the universe. Such is benevolence, that noble principle of our nature, which, unlimited by the narrow ideas of our own interest, or by the interest of our relations, or even of our native land, derives pleasure from increasing happiness in the most remote regions of the earth. The operation of this propensity is more languid and less perceptible than that of any other affection of the human mind; which has given occasion to call in question its existence, or hardly to reckon upon it all, as a motive of action, or a source of gratification. For which the following obvious reasons may be assigned:

It is readily admitted that universal benevolence, or the affection which

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we bear to our species in distant countries, is, in its nature, feeble and indolent, in comparison with other public affections; because, in the wisdom of Providence, the vigour and activity of affections are adapted to the means and opportunities of usefulness. To our relations by blood we are attached by the strongest affection, because we have it more in our power to render them kind offices, and effectually promote their interest. Remoter connections of neighbourhood, profession, and political associations, make a slighter impression upon the heart, and constitute a more imperfect claim to our sympathy, because it is but seldom, and in more limited degrees, that it can be productive of efficient benevolence; and examples like the present, where we have it in our power to relieve the distress of a whole class of  
our



our fellow creatures, still more rarely occur.

AGAIN, the principle of universal benevolence may appear more doubtful, because it is far less cultivated and improved than any other affection of the human heart. Every faculty and power of our nature requires culture and habit to give maturity to its force, and a proper direction to its exertions. Hence education makes such a striking difference in the characters of individuals and nations. Many ages have elapsed without any vestige of those splendid arts, which contribute to the convenience of life, and to the honour of human capacity; not because men were destitute of the elements of taste and ingenuity, but because no pains were taken, no means used, to rouse them into action, and to exalt them to refinement: So it is with

moral dispositions. Their improvement, their usefulness, and their energy, depend upon exercise and attention to the means of invigorating and maturing them. Now, so far from being cultivated, the prejudices of vulgar education, and the narrow politics of states, mutually fortifying each other, have co-operated, in every age, to stifle the more generous feelings of the heart, and to counteract the plans founded upon them for the common welfare of the species. The interests of different countries have, hitherto, been too much considered as inconsistent or hostile to one another. We have been taught to grieve at the prosperity of foreign nations, and to rejoice at their misfortunes. Under such gross prejudices, and such monstrous perversion of feeling, is it matter of surprise that the operation of benevolence, with respect to distant nations, has

has been so long suspended, and so little discernible in action? It is pleasing to remark, that, from the progress of philosophy, and the benign spirit of the Christian religion, more liberal sentiments begin to prevail with respect to the common interests, and common relation, of all mankind. The coincidence of this improvement of the human mind, with diligence and success in exploring every region of the globe, and with the extension of commerce, by which distant nations are more intimately connected, affords us reason to hope, that benevolence will attain its utmost enlargement and force, when it shall find the widest scope for exertion, and be rendered capable of the most substantial and extensive utility.

CONVINCED, my friends, as I hope you are, of the existence of this affection,

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not only from the force of abstract argument, but from the witness of your own spirits, and the pleasing experience of its influence, I congratulate you upon the gratification which you must derive from the abolition of the slave-trade. Glad tidings of great joy are announced to the tender heart and the sympathising soul, ever ready to mourn with those that mourn. Let the earth be glad, for the doom of bondage is sealed, and the rod wrested from the hand of the oppressor. Tranquility shall be restored to those ill-fated, persecuted regions, which for several centuries have teemed with intestine wars, unheard of perfidy, false accusations, and bloodshed, too shocking to relate. Such engines were used to decoy and entrap the unwary African, by nations boasting of their religion and civilization. Such engines did Britons use. May our future conduct wipe the stain from the name, and



and draw the veil of oblivion over such hideous and disgraceful scenes.

BUT our joy, upon this occasion, is not confined to effects merely negative, or the bare cessation of cruelties. More transporting views expand to the benevolent heart. Millions of our fellow creatures shall emerge from ignorance and barbarism. All those accommodations which contribute to the convenience and pleasure of life, will be quickly introduced among them. Furnished with the means of rational improvement, a depreciated despised people shall ascend to their level in the creation. And what above all is matter of delightful contemplation, we hope for a speedy fulfilment of the prediction, *that Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hand unto God. They who have been hitherto foreigners and strangers shall be*  
made

*made fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.*

THE slow and limited progress of the Christian religion has often been the cause of deep regret to the believer, and made a topic of discrediting it by persons ill-affected to its interest. To those who study the œconomy of Divine Providence, and investigate the character of the professors of the Christian religion, especially under such forms as have been too often exhibited to distant nations, the objection is easily solved. The most benevolent designs, agreeably to the plan of Providence, are effected by the intervention of secondary and moral causes, which strike upon the senses and impress the understanding. Attending to these observations, we must perceive, that it would have been

been a contradiction to the established influence of motives, that it would have been nothing short of a miracle, if the gospel had been believed or received by idolatrous nations, upon the testimony of those who carried the report of it. — Were men, whose hands were *full of blood*, the fit instruments to promulgate the gospel of peace? Was it credible that any motive of friendship or good will could induce the conquerors to force their religion upon the conquered? Must not disgust and horror have been excited by the very name of Christianity, associated with the ideas of treachery, rapacity, and murder? If we could suppose, among nations so rude in understanding, such accurate discernment as to distinguish between the principles and actions of men, yet, even in this view, reason must have revolted against propositions which contradicted the irresistible

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testimony of sense, and the universal axioms of reason, and which laid the stress of duty upon such frivolous observances as could neither redound to the improvement of the individual, nor the benefit of society. When Christians shall approach the heathen nations under the alluring address of friends and brothers, when the justice of their dealings, and the charity of their actions, shall display a fair specimen of the spirit of their religion; and when that religion, stripped of all adventitious deformities and human interpolations, shall be held forth in its genuine purity and simplicity, then, and not till then, may the Christian expect the triumph of his faith. Then *shall Jesus go forth, conquering and to conquer; his name shall be glorious over all; every knee shall bow to him, and confess that he is Lord, to the praise of God the Father.*

It



It is with particular satisfaction I inform you, that a plan of intercourse with Africa has already commenced under such wise and generous regulations, as affords every prospect of realizing the scenes which I have now described\*.

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\* For the evidence of this fact, see the Report of the Court of Directors to the Sierra Leone Company, with the postscript, January 3. 1792.

For the satisfaction of those, who may not have the opportunity of perusing that Report, it is proper to observe, that the object of the Sierra Leone Company is, not merely the extension of commerce and the cultivation of the country, but the civilization and happiness of the natives.

“ Every measure (as it is expressed in the Report, page 49) will be taken for laying a foundation of happiness to the natives, by the promotion of industry, the discouragement of polygamy, the setting up of schools, and the gradual introduction of religious and moral instruction among them, which it is hoped will be rendered the more easy, as they are most of them somewhat acquainted with the English tongue. The most wide and general diffusion of European light, knowledge, and improvement, the Directors hope, through the medium of this Company, may thus be introduced into the continent of Africa; and it will be a particular instruction to their servants abroad to apply their attention to this great object.”

THE abolition of the slave-trade, itself so fertile a subject of devout praise, suggests,

In the declaration sent out for acquainting the Princes and Chiefs, as well as the natives in general, with the real views of the Company, they express themselves in the following words:

“ They wish (page 31) always to keep peace, and will make no war, unless they are first attacked; but they will suffer no one to be ill treated on their ground, nor to be seized and carried off into slavery; but will themselves punish their own people for any crimes fairly proved to have been committed by them.

“ Black and white settlers will all be equally governed, and will have their persons and property secured according to the laws of Great Britain.

“ Schools for reading, writing, and accounts, will be set up by the Company, who will be ready to receive and instruct the children of such natives as shall be willing to put them under their care.”

The postscript to the Report thus concludes:

“ Already they anticipate the happy effects of their labours. They look forward with delight to that joyful period, when, by the influence of the Company’s measures, and the efficacy of its example, the continent of Africa shall have been rescued from her present state of darkness and misery, and shall exhibit a far different scene, of light and knowledge, and civilization and order, and peaceful industry, and domestic comfort.”

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gests, in the connection of ideas, peculiar grounds of thanksgiving to the subjects of the British empire. It naturally invites us to recognise the excellence of our constitution, and, more particularly, affords us a recent example of the beneficial effects of the right of the subject to petition the Legislature for the redress of grievances. There can be no doubt, that the unanimous, pressing desire of the people, of every rank and description, has, under the auspices of Providence, been the instrument of accomplishing the glorious deliverance in which we now rejoice. The success already attained ought to be considered as an omen for good, and points out the plain,

The patrons and abettors of this benevolent design are entitled to the praise of patriotism in the most liberal sense of the word. To the benevolent heart their success must be more deeply interesting, than that of any scheme calculated merely for the aggrandisement or prosperity of our own nation.

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legal, and successful method of accomplishing every political improvement.— Instead of dwelling upon the dark side of things, and indulging fretfulness ourselves, and infusing it into others, we ought, with a grateful heart, to contemplate the pre-eminence we have hitherto enjoyed among the nations, and to exult in the persuasion, that the inherent vigour of the British constitution is adequate to the reformation of every abuse, and the accomplishment of every beneficial institution, suggested by the increasing light of the age in which we live.

THIS naturally calls our attention to another ground of thankfulness, namely, the general diffusion and rapid progress of knowledge and liberality. What delightful scenes were lately displayed in every part of the kingdom! We beheld  
men



men of jarring sentiments and interests, as it were, instinctively drawn together *by the cords of love*. Members of religious sects, formerly heated against each other by animosities which excluded social intercourse, took counsel together, and joined heart and hand in promoting the cause of humanity. It was a foretaste of heaven, where all our differences of opinion; and all our hard sayings shall be forgotten; or, if remembered,—remembered only to inflame our future love, and enhance our enjoyment of the exalted state in which we shall then be established.

WHILE I have pointed out, as a ground of thankfulness, that light and liberality which pervade all ranks of men, and which inspired so many petitions for the deliverance of the oppressed, I do not mean to detract from the merits of the  
Legislature,

Legislature, nor of those particular members of it who have taken a more forward and active part in encouraging and enforcing the national desire. When we consider the strong prejudices of legislative bodies against every species of innovation, and the powerful commercial interest to which the existence of the slave-trade was represented as essential, candor must allot a great share of praise to the majority, which listened to the dictates of justice and humanity; while the zeal and unwearied perseverance of the illustrious individual, who has taken a lead in this business, must excite the highest esteem of his virtue, they must, at the same time, constitute the strongest claim to the gratitude of every benevolent heart. One circumstance is particularly entitled to our attention, as it ascertains the superior dignity of the cause in which we have been so deeply interested,

interested, and reflects the highest honour upon its advocates of every party. The discussion of it, on repeated occasions, and in every stage, has remained pure and unmixed with any taint of political influence and prejudice. The force of truth and humanity united disdain the aid, and overpower the resistance, of all mean and selfish motives, and impart elevation to the characters of those, who feel their influence and obey their dictates. Attentive to such examples, we are enabled to explain and testify by experience the truth of the divine maxim, that *charity shall cover a multitude of sins*. We consign to oblivion the offences which have formerly arisen from faction and political interests, and from the same generous and united exertion of illustrious talents, we anticipate the success of every plan calculated to gratify the ardent wish of the enlightened patriot.

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LET such, as profess to approve of the sentiments now illustrated, be careful to adhere to their influence through every line and department of life. It were an extravagant stretch of charity to suppose, that, among the multitudes who have subscribed for the abolition of the slave-trade, there are not some who are far from acting up to the principle of a measure, which may be construed as a public pledge of their justice and humanity. Of these, some may have acted a sincere part by yielding to the impulse of feelings, which are occasionally overcome by the temptations of interest. But there are others, it may be <sup>suspected,</sup> ~~expected,~~ steeled against every tender feeling, who are always forward to embark in any popular measure, and who, upon this occasion, have assumed the garb of humanity to divert the suspicion of spectators from that unrighteousness, upon which they



they are *building their own houses*. Among these there may be some so ignorant as to deceive themselves, and to imagine that they make attonement for the concealed wrongs which they daily commit by protesting loudly against public oppression. Such men bring disgrace upon an honourable cause, and plunge into the deepest guilt by adding profaneness and hypocrisy to all their other crimes.

I HOPE that there are few, or none, of my hearers, who fall under the charge of the glaring inconsistency which I have now described; but there are many slighter examples of oppression, which are either tolerated, or inadvertently practised by persons, who, upon this and other occasions, are ready enough to stand forth in the cause of humanity. All instances of usurped or abused authority exhibit an inherent depravity of temper,

too nearly approaching to that, which has hitherto approved and conducted the slave-trade. Every little domestic tyrant, who domineers among his relations and dependents, and treats them like slaves—parents, who, by severe usage, *provoke their children to wrath*—husbands who are *bitter against their wives*—masters who make their servants *serve with rigour*, and make their lives *grievous with hard bondage*; who exact from them work above their strength, and with-hold from them the rest and provisions necessary for the refreshment of nature—landlords who are oppressive to their tenants, and who prosecute them with the utmost rigor of law, without any regard to unforeseen casualties, which have frustrated their honest intentions—all such persons discover the embryo forms of those corrupt dispositions, which, when stimulated by the vehement thirst of gain, emboldened  
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by the combination of numbers, and screened by the distance of the scene, have at length brought forth the multiplied wrongs dragged into view by investigating the history of the slave-trade. It may be useful to observe, that the perpetration of the most flagitious deeds, in the course of this trade, has been traced to persons who acted under authority, and were entitled only to a subordinate share of profit. This ought to instruct persons of influence to look, with a jealous eye, over those to whom they delegate their authority, and entrust with the management of their affairs. Such persons, intoxicated with a sudden elevation above those of their own rank, are too ready to exercise their borrowed power with insolence and tyranny which would shock the more generous feelings of those from whom it flows. The mild, condescending temper of our religion ought



ought to be manifested in our daily and habitual intercourse with one another ; and by doing every thing in our power to alleviate the mortifications, arising from the subordination in which any of our fellow creatures are placed by fortune, or the artificial distinctions of society. Neither do I think it trifling or foreign to the purpose of this discourse to observe, that the marvellous condescension of Jesus, who was the brightness of his Father's glory, by interposing for the deliverance of mean and sinful creatures, ought to inspire kind affections, not only to the lowest of the human race ; but ought to beget soft and tender feelings towards subordinate ranks of creatures, and to induce us to treat them with all the gentleness and mercy compatible with the purposes, for which they are subjected to our authority.

LET



LET all of us more and more cultivate the spirit of pure and disinterested benevolence, inculcated by the genius and precepts of our religion. We have seen, in the event which has been the subject of this discourse, that this principle is not visionary, unavailing, and insignificant. It has been productive of real, substantial, and extensive good.— It has wrought the deliverance of oppressed nations. We cannot tell what opportunities may occur for its future exertion; but of this we may be assured, that if it were more generally cultivated by the nations professing Christianity, it would contribute to the speedy diffusion of light, civilization, and freedom. Nations would rise up against nations no more. *The swords of men would be turned into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning hooks.* In a literal sense *the gathering of the people* would be unto Jesus, and all kindreds

kindreds and tongues united in that eternal peace, which is the ultimate object of his religion.

THAT acute sensibility of temper, which renders persons most susceptible of sympathy with the distresses of their fellow creatures, and most prone to relieve them, communicates, at the same time, more pungent impressions of private misfortunes and disappointments. The neglect of the world, bitter disappointments, and the unkindness of friends, sink deep into their hearts, and make their countenance sad. If they are doomed to struggle with narrow circumstances, and rendered incapable, not only of gratifying the liberal desires of their heart, but of providing decently for the education and maintenance of those in whom they are interested by the strong ties of affection, they are ready to become peevish

vish and discontented, to grow weary of well-doing, to view with too much indignation the success of weak and wicked men, and the homage indiscriminately paid to prosperity. To correct this perversion of a very amiable feeling, it might be of great use to go more and more out of ourselves; to give a wider scope to our sensibility; to embrace the interests of human kind; and to enter, with deep and anxious concern, into comprehensive and extended plans of benevolence. If they are unsuccessful, the disappointment will be soothed by the consciousness of a right and generous affection, while, at the same time, from a firm persuasion of divine goodness, our hopes shall be suspended and delayed rather than extinguished. We behold a plan of progressive benevolence, which shall undoubtedly terminate in the highest moral perfection. Every step and

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approach



approach to this desirable consummation, every successful scheme of doing good, especially such as happen in our own day, and to which we ourselves have contributed, we shall contemplate with devout gratitude, and with the most pure and fervent joy. This enlargement of soul, and refinement of taste, will render us every day more indifferent to narrow and selfish concerns, till, at length, in the confidence of boundless and eternal goodness, we shall lose all sense of those slight and fugitive evils which center in our own persons and families.

*Trust in the Lord, and do good ; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord ; and he shall give thee the desire of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord ; trust also in him ; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring*



*bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day: Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him; fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.*

The first eight pages of this Discourse were printed before the House of Commons had fixed any period for the abolition of the slave-trade, otherwise part of the note in pages 2 and 3. would have been omitted or expressed in different words.

1833

Received of the  
Honble the Secretary of the  
War Department  
the sum of \$1000  
for the purchase of  
land in the State of  
Ohio

Witness my hand and seal  
this 1st day of March 1833

John C. Calhoun

**P R A Y E R.**

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**O** LORD, thou art *love*, the *Father of mercies*, and the *God of all comfort*. Independent and perfectly happy in thy own existence, thou hast exercised creating power to display thy goodness, and to extend happiness. We contemplate, with admiration, diversified operations of infinite bounty, in the formation and arrangement of the inanimate parts of the creation, subservient to the convenience of its inhabitants; in the various orders of beings thou hast made; in the capacities and instincts, with which they are furnished,

furnished, leading to their preservation and comfort; in the fruitfulness of the earth, and the liberal provision thou hast made for the returning wants of all thy creatures; and in the tendency of all the laws of nature to order and felicity. *How manifold, O Lord, are thy works? in wisdom hast thou made them all. Thou art good to all, and thy tender mercies are over all thy other works.*

WE praise thee for thy distinguished favour to the human race, for the light of reason and conscience, and, above all, for the glad tidings of salvation published by thy son Christ Jesus. In his name we draw nigh unto thee, and implore the forgiveness of our sins. As we name his name, may we depart from iniquity, and make his example the model of our conduct.

THOU,



THOU, O Lord, hast made of one blood all nations of the earth, and we offer up *prayers, intercessions, and thanks for all men.* We desire to enter affectionately into the interests of our fellow creatures of every kindred and tongue; and to consider every instance of deliverance or prosperity, vouchsafed to them, as a new obligation to give thanks to thee, our common parent, *from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift.*

WE rejoice exceedingly in every event tending to control or remove those oppressions, to which any of our species have hitherto been subjected. We offer to thee this day the sacrifice of thanksgiving, for the prospect of an approaching abolition of that ungodly traffic in slaves, which has brought reproach and guilt upon our nation, and been the occasion of violence, depression, and misery

ry to multitudes of our fellow creatures. We adore thy long-suffering patience in suspending those judgments which our sins have deserved, till the spirit of compassion and the desire of reformation have pervaded the people; and now encourage us to hope, that past iniquity shall not be laid to our charge. We pray that those dispositions may still be cherished and kept alive, and that they may operate with vigour upon all who are intrusted with the direction of public measures, and accomplish, speedily and effectually, every demand of justice and humanity. Recompence with thy favour all those persons, who have been the happy instruments of working so great a deliverance for our country and for our fellow creatures.

We pray for success to all schemes of benevolence, and more particularly for  
such

such as have been formed with the direct purpose of extending light and true religion to the nations which have formerly suffered by our oppression. May the heart that *deviseth liberal things* be more and more gratified with the means and opportunities of reducing them to practice. We trust in thy goodness that *those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled*, and that effectual benevolence shall, sooner or later, be the reward of all who cultivate generous dispositions of mind.

We have all of us too much reason to lament that we have been careless and indifferent about the concerns of mankind in distant countries; that we have often neglected opportunities of usefulness which thy kind providence has placed within our reach; that a mean attachment to interest has stifled the voice

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of compassion, and turned us aside from those liberal purposes which thy good Spirit has inspired. May the characteristic temper of our religion be habitually displayed by kind affections to all; compassion for the miserable, forgiveness of injuries, and unwearied zeal in doing good. Like our Divine Master may we esteem it *more blessed to give than to receive*. May our love be *without dissimulation*, and may we consider one another to *provoke unto love and to good works*.

WE praise thee that we live in an age and country abounding with plans and events so pleasing to every benevolent heart. We rejoice in the rapid diffusion of light, science, civilization, and liberty; and we fervently pray for the removal of every thing that may obstruct or retard their universal extension. That bigotry, tyranny, restraints upon science,



science, and every species of persecution may be banished from the earth. We anticipate with transport the approach of a kingdom wherein dwelleth righteousness, when all nations shall be united in *the knowledge of thee, the only true God, and of thy son Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal.* We pray that the gospel may be purified from all the errors and corruptions by which it has been defaced; that it may resume its primitive lustre and simplicity, and enter into the hearts of men with *the power and demonstration of the Spirit.* May its sanctifying influence be conspicuous in the lives of its professors; *let their light so shine before men, that others may see their good works and glorify thee their Father who art in heaven.* Impress the hearts of the teachers of religion with a sense of the importance of the office they bear. May they conscientiously study the truth as it is in Jesus; and recom-

mend it to the approbation of others by diligent labours, exemplary lives, and an affectionate solicitude for the welfare of their people. We pray that the disciples of Jesus may all be united in love, that *they may be one as thou and thy son art one, and the world may know that thou hast sent him*; and that differences in opinion and name, instead of exciting arrogance, pride, contempt, and hatred against one another, may operate as powerful motives to humility, forbearance, and charity. Knowing assuredly that *the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*; and that *he, that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God*. May we follow after the things which make for peace, and things where-with one may edify another.

WE pray for our native land. Restrain the progress of irreligion, dissipation, covetousness,

vetousness, and faction. May piety, sobriety, and a spirit of true patriotism prevail among all ranks of men. Bless thy servant, the King; may he long live to be an example of virtue to his family and to the nation. May he be faithful in his station, and may our privileges be transmitted, safe and improved, to posterity. Shew thy favour to the Queen, the Prince of Wales, and all the Royal Family. Thankful for our excellent constitution of government, and the pre-eminence we have long enjoyed among the nations, may we pursue the reformation of every abuse, and the extension of improvement, in the spirit of peace and wisdom, and with a due respect to *the powers that be.*

WE present our intercessions in behalf of all ranks and conditions of men. May the rich consider their wealth as a  
talent



talent for which they are accountable to thee, that they may not be *high minded*, nor *trust in uncertain riches*, but *do good*, and *become rich in good works*, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up for themselves in store a good foundation for the time to come. May the hardships of the poor be diminished, by the increasing encouragement of industry, and the more general prevalence of beneficent dispositions. Honest and contented with their station, may their minds be exalted by the strong consolations of the gospel, first preached to them.

WE condole with all who mourn for the loss or affliction of their friends. Let not the excess of their sorrow extinguish the glorious hopes set before them in the gospel; but believing that *Christ died and rose again*, may they also believe that *them who sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him.*



him. Give unto them that mourn in Zion beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Visit in mercy all who are troubled in mind, and who have sorrows which their own hearts only know. May light spring out of darkness, and the consolations of thy Spirit, which are neither few nor small, revive and delight their soul. Sanctify bodily sickness and pain to all who are afflicted with them. Prepare the dying for their awful change, and may the living lay it to heart that they must soon die. We supplicate thy mercy to all widows and fatherless children—may they trust in thee, and know that those who trust in thee shall never be desolate. In the faithfulness and care of guardians, and in the tender and compassionate feelings of friends, may they experience supplies of consolation, which, according to the plans of a bountiful Providence,

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are reserved for all those who are bereaved of their nearest relations, and most endearing enjoyments. May such of us, as are more prosperous and happy in the society of our relations, never forget, that *true religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction. Look down from the height of thy sanctuary to hear the groans of the prisoner.* Let not human compassion abandon even those miseries which are the offspring of vice. May mercy and justice ever go hand in hand. May excessive severity in punishment be repressed, and necessary punishments be conducted with every circumstance of lenity and mitigation, compatible with the protection of the innocent and the good order of society. May the penal effects of vice more and more contribute to over-awe the spirit of violence, and to diminish the number of crimes.—

From

From the established connection between guilt and misery, and the tendency of human laws to avenge more open and atrocious iniquity, may we learn to apprehend thy moral government, and to dread those awful judgments, which, in the full consummation of thy righteous administration, shall overtake those latent crimes which escape without punishment in this present life.

WE recommend our friends and benefactors to thy protection, and earnestly pray for the forgiveness of our enemies. And all we ask is in the name of thy son Jesus Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man. *Amen.*

ERRATA—Page 6. line 7. dele of—page 40. line 15. for *hamity* read *humanity*.

1-10-78  
The established connection between  
guilt and misery, and the tendency  
of human laws to strengthen more open  
and atrocious injuries, may we learn to  
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ishment in this world.



We recommend our friends and be-  
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diator between God and man. Amen.

ERRATA—The title of the book is 'The